

# Wilderness Use

## Save What You Find

Enjoy your discoveries and take them home via photographs, drawings, and memories. Natural objects of beauty or interest such as moose antlers, plants, driftwood, cultural or archeological resources, greenstones, agates, datolite and other minerals, including those found in Lake Superior must be left where they are so others can experience the same sense of discovery. Removing, possessing, or disturbing park resources is prohibited. This may seem like a harmless act, but the cumulative effect of many people doing the same can be quite damaging to park resources. Picking small quantities of berries and wild edibles for personal consumption is permitted.

## Insects

Expect mosquitoes, black flies, gnats, and other insects to peak in June or July. During wet summers, mosquito populations can continue well into August. Bring insect repellent, netting, or other skin barriers. Make sure your tent’s mosquito netting is in good repair and the zippers work. Dry summers will produce an abundance of yellowjackets. Bring an epinephrine kit if you or a member of your party is allergic to bee stings. For others, over-the-counter antihistamines may help counter minor swelling and itching.

## Minimize Use of Fires

Campfires are permitted at only a handful of campgrounds. A backpacking stove is a must; these stoves are lightweight, dependable, easier to use, and less damaging to the park than wood fires. Twig-burning backpacking stoves are permitted. Where campfires are allowed, a metal fire ring is provided; never build your own ring. Gather only dead and down wood away from the camp area. Use small diameter wood no larger than an adult’s wrist, as this will burn completely and will eliminate the need to pack a hatchet or saw. Collect wood from a wide area and away from the immediate vicinity of camp. This keeps the camp area from becoming depleted of wood and potential nutrients. Do not break branches or strip bark from standing trees, live or dead. Resist the temptation to gather driftwood or

wood from beaver dams or lodges. The fire should be kept small; massive fires only waste wood. Once finished, make sure the flames and coals are dead out and cold to the touch. Double check that it is out before going to bed or leaving camp.

## Canoeing/Kayaking

Lake Superior is well known for its cold temperatures, fog, and sudden squalls that can generate waves that could easily swamp a canoe. This along with scarce outer shore landing sites adds to the potential danger. Small, open vessels are discouraged from entering these cold treacherous waters and are encouraged to use the numerous miles of waterways that the inland lakes provide. Canoeists and kayakers should be familiar with weather patterns and consult the Marine Forecast at ranger stations before embarking. Be prepared to adjust your schedule to the weather. A portable marine radio is recommended.

**Portages** – Canoe routes and portages are on the northeast half of the Island. Portages are marked with a letter “P” on a 4” x 4” post. **PF**D – Every canoeist and kayaker must have a U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation device. Wear it; your life may depend on it. **Boat Rental** – Canoe and motorboat rentals are available at Windigo and Rock Harbor. For more information contact the Rock Harbor Lodge. (refer to page 2).

## Wheeled Vehicles/Devices

Wheeled vehicles (except for wheelchairs) or other mechanical forms of transportation are not allowed on trails. This includes bicycles and portaging devices.

## Weapons, Traps, & Nets

The use or possession of weapons, traps, and nets is prohibited. Weapons include any implements designed to discharge a projectile or missile in the air or water. Fireworks are prohibited.

## Pets

Dogs, cats, and other pets are not allowed. This includes pets on boats within the park boundaries, which extend 4 1/2 miles into Lake Superior from the outermost land

areas of the park. Visitors bringing pets to Isle Royale will be required to leave immediately. Pets disturb wildlife and can transmit diseases, particularly to wolves. Special conditions apply to guide dogs. Please contact the park for further information.

## Boating

All boaters staying overnight at anchor, at docks, or in campgrounds must first obtain a camping permit. Lake Superior offers challenging and often dangerous weather in the form of dense fog, high winds, waves, and thunderstorms. Combine this with rocky reefs, limited safe harbors, and Isle Royale’s remoteness, and it pays for you, your crew, and your boat to be shipshape. For additional information on boating and trip planning please request the park’s “Lake Superior Boating” brochure. In addition to Houghton, Rock Harbor, and Windigo, boaters may obtain Isle Royale camping permits and pay user fees at the U. S. Forest Service Ranger Station in Grand Marais, Minnesota.

**Restricted Water Activities** – Water skiing and personal watercraft including vessels commonly referred to as jet skis, waverunners, sea-doo’s, wet bikes, or surf jets are prohibited. Since all of the park’s inland lakes are located within designated Wilderness, they can only be explored by paddling. Vessels with motors (even if not in use) are prohibited on inland lakes and streams. **Portable Generators, Electronic and Motorized Devices** – Operation of electronic and motorized devices such as stereos, televisions, radios tuned to commercial stations and portable generators is not permitted except in developed and open-water motorized zones. Developed areas include the Windigo and Rock Harbor developed areas, and the Mott Island Headquarters area. Open water motorized zones include Lake Superior waters outside of designated “quiet/no wake waters”. **On-Board Generators** – The operation or use of permanently installed (by the boat manufacturer) on-board vessel generators is allowed between 6 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. in developed zones and at the following docks: Beaver Island, Belle Isle, Caribou Island, Grace Island, Hay Bay, Malone Bay, Rock Harbor, and Windigo. On-board generators

may not be operated or used at the following public docks: Birch Island, Chippewa Harbor, Daisy Farm, Duncan Bay, Duncan Narrows, McCargoe Cove, Merritt Lane, Moskey Basin, Siskiwit Bay, Three Mile, Todd Harbor, and Tookers Island. Vessels at anchor within Quiet/No Wake Zones may operate on-board generators between 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m., except when anchored within 1/4-mile of a designated park campground. **Quiet/No Wake Zones** – These zones promote a quality visitor experience by providing relatively tranquil, natural marine surroundings. Within the zone, vessels must not exceed 5 mph or create a wake. Quiet/No Wake Zones include specified areas near Todd Harbor, Johns Island, Barnum/Washington Islands, Hay Bay, Wright Island, Malone Bay, Chippewa Harbor, Conglomerate Bay, Moskey Basin, Lorelei Lane, Tobin Harbor, Merritt Lane, Passage Island, Duncan Bay, Five Finger Bay, Lane Cove, Robinson Bay, Pickerel Cove, Belle Harbor, Crystal Cove, and McCargoe Cove. Consult boater’s maps and brochures available at Park Visitor Centers and on-board the *Ranger III* for specific information.

**Alcohol Ban** – Open containers of alcohol are prohibited in campgrounds, on docks, and onboard docked vessels at both Siskiwit Bay and McCargoe Cove.

**Pollution Prevention** – Head pump-out service is available at Windigo and Rock Harbor when the concession operation is open. Federal regulations prohibit the discharge of any waste, including gray water, into park waters. Vessels carrying spare fuel in portable containers must use legally approved containers. Fuel may not be stored on docks.

**Customs** – All vessels arriving from Canada (U.S. or Canadian) must clear U.S. customs at Windigo or Rock Harbor Ranger Stations.

**Divers** – Please refer to your dive permit regulations concerning compressor use.

**Fuel** – Gasoline is sold from Mid-June to early September at Windigo; gasoline and diesel fuel are sold from Mid-May to Mid-September at Rock Harbor. Diesel fuel is not available at Windigo. Early and late season service or fuel may be obtained at Windigo and Mott Island if personnel are available.

**Greg Blust, Houghton District Interpreter**

